ger (North) of NCCF allegedly manipulated shortage of 22000 kg. in 1978-79 in Tea Stocks in Shahdara godown through Godown Incharge, which were sold in trade giving huge loss of about Rs. 4 lacs to NCCF and complaints in this regard were overlooked deliberately to favour the guilty officer;

(b) whether the lady staff was transferred by said officer on this matter being brought to notice and all concerned records were confined by said officer to escape action; and

(c) if so, what action is proposed to be taken against the guilty officer?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI D. L. BAITHA): (a) No, Sir. During the three years period from 1976-77 to 1978-79, the NCCF handled tea business in Delhi of total quantity of 20 lakh Kgs, against which the shortage assessed was only 8104 Kgs, which works out to 0.44 per cent of the sales

(b) The lady staff was transferred in the normal course.

(c) Does not arise.

Sale of Export Rice to Simex International, Bombay by NFFC

962. SHRI SHANKER SINH VAGHELA: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether 1900 MTs rice from the export surplus was sold to M/s. Simex International, Bombay by Regional Manager (West) of NCCF in 1981-82 on cre

(b) whether the said party paid only a part of the bill amount and refused the balance after taking delivery of rice and the said disposal was planned by Regional Manager (West) in advance to favour the private party and for his personal gains;

(c) whether the people managing the said firm are also in the management of Taj Consumer Cooperative Society to whom the said Reigonal Manager sold bulk quantity of dry fruits in 1983-84; and

(d) if so, the suitable punitive action taken against the erring officer?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI D. L. BAITHA): (a) The NCCF have reported that about 1727 MTs of rice valued at Rs. 21.91 lacs was sold to M/s. Simex International, Bombay. For this purpose, a mutual open and current account was maintained by the NCCF in which the amount paid as advance was credited to the account of the NCCF while the amount payable under the bills for sale were debited to the account of the firm.

(b) The firm only made part payments of the bills during 1982-83 and 1983-84 and an amount of Rs. 4.56 lakhs is still outstanding for which the NCCF has filed a suit for recovery in the High Court of Bombay in Nov., 1985. There seems to be no record to indicate that the said proposal was planned by the Regional Manager (West) to favour the firm for his personal gains.

(c) The NCCF has not enquired into the matter from this angle.

(d) The matter being *sub-judice*, no action has been initiated by the NCCF against its officials.

Availability of T.V. sets to middle and lower middle classes

963. SHRI P. N. SUKUL: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) the percentage of area of the country covered by T.V. transmitters including relay stations;

(b) whether Government propose to take any step to make T.V. (viewing) sets available to middle classes and lower middle classes at prices which they can afford, in view of the extensive areas of the country which are under the range of these transmitters;

(c) if so, details thereof;

(d) whether arrangements are being made for community viewing of T.V. programmes in rural areas; and

(e) if so, details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI H. K. L. BHAGAT): (a) The existing TV transmitters/relay centre provide service to about 49.6 per cent area of the country.

(b) and (c) Electronic Trade & Technology Development Corporation (ETTDC), a public sector undertaking under the Department of Electronics, under their Material Technology Brand (MTB), are providing help to TV industry to produce quality products at reasonable cost by supplying material procured by them in bulk along with necessary technology. Secondly, industrial approvals are issued liberally with viable production capacity to derive economies of scale and encourage healthy competition. Thirdly, broad banding has been allowed for the entertainment electronics. Fourthly, the electronics components industry has been delicensed including MRTP companies and import of technology in this sector is liberally permitted. Fifthly, excise duty on 31cms|36cms size black and white TV sets has been abolished.

(d) and (e) Provision of community viewing TV sets is primarily the responsibility of concerned State Govts./Union Territory Administrations. However, as far as Central Govt. is concerned, by the end of Sixth Plan (31-3-1985), 10876 community viewing TV sets were installed in various parts of the country. As a special case, it has been decided to provide during the Seventh Plan period 5000 community viewing TV sets in seven States of North-East region, one hundred sets in the State of Sikkim and eight in Lakshadweep Group of Islands. Installation of the sets has already commenced.

Reaction to Interim Report of Bachawat Commission

964. SHRI LAL K. ADVANI: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Bachawat Commission has submitted an interim report to Government; if so, when;

(b) what is the reaction thereto, from the journalists of news agencies, newspapers and non-journalist employees; and

(c) Government's response in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI BINDESHWARI DUBEY): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The Wage Boards for Journalists and Non-Jaurnalist Newspaper employees publicised on the 29th August, 1988 their tentative proposals on wage rates and allied matters and called for submissions thereon by 17th October, 1988.

(c) Does not arise.

Temporary Employees of AIR and Doordarshan

965. SHRI LAL K. ADVANI: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Supreme Court had opined that the temporary artists of All India Radio and Doordarshan be considered as regular employees of the Government; if so, the date and text of the relevant portion of the judgement; and

(b) the follow-up action so far and steps proposed to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI H. K. L. BHAGAT): (a) In 1982, the Government introduced a scheme for grant of pension to Staff Artists of AIR and Doordarshan who were engaged on long term contract. Under the scheme the Staff Artists were to be converted as (i) Government servants; (ii) Artists on the basis of their duties and further subject to their option and being found fit in screening. This scheme was challenged in the Supreme Court. Relevant extracts from the judgement of the Supreme Court delevered on 25th April, 1988, are attached. (*See* Statement below.)

(b) The Judgement is at an advanced stage of implementation.